

STOW TV 2010 Report

The Board of Selectmen established and appointed the Public, Education, and Government (PEG) Committee in November 2002 for the purpose of establishing a local cable TV access channel for the Town of Stow to provide programming in areas of public affairs, education and town government. As part of the governance agreement established by the Board of Selectman on August 9, 2005, the name of the committee was changed to the Local Access Channel Advisory Committee (LACAC). Funding for operations is provided through license agreements negotiated by the Stow Cable License Advisory Committee with Comcast and Verizon.

The cable station is referred to as “Stow TV” and is available on Comcast Channel 9 and Verizon Channels 32 and 33. Stow TV is intended to operate with volunteers and provide video access to town residents. Residents are welcome to use Stow TV equipment for video recording or editing. Stow TV will provide training. Anyone interested in volunteering or contributing video or photos, or assisting productions may call 978-897-7732 or email stowtv@stow-ma.gov.

Stow TV stores video as DVDs and “mpeg” files, and schedules it with a video server computer. There are about 650 shows in the video archives. Stow TV program schedules are publicized in the local newspapers, on the town web site, through email lists, with posters in several public locations, and on the Stow TV bulletin board. Stow TV is on the web at www.stowtv.org

In 2010, Coordinator Anne VanTine managed overall operations of the station. Assistant Coordinator Kathy O’Keefe created, implemented, and publicized program schedules. She also created announcements and displays of photos on the bulletin board. As Technical Assistant, Lew Halprin made improvements to recording setups and devised innovative and practical solutions for various recording situations.

Lew Halprin, Linda Stokes, Mike Jordan, Jonathan Daisy, Marika Barnett, Dan Nicholson, Lynn Colletti, and Anne VanTine produced, recorded, and edited shows seen on Stow TV. Lew Halprin recorded or helped with video production of many events in town, and shows he produced formed the backbone of every Stow TV schedule. Linda Stokes recorded most of the Selectmen meetings. Ralph DeFlorio and Scott Glorioso assisted with some concert recordings.

This year Stow TV equipped a second Town Building conference room with installed cameras and microphones cabled to a recording capability in the station room. A great deal of research and planning led to a cost-effective solution with compact equipment that fit into the space available and integrated with existing equipment within the station.

Also new this year is the “Stow Government Channel” which cablecasts Selectmen, School Committee, and other government-related shows at frequent intervals on Verizon channel 33, an additional channel provided for in the 2008 Verizon contract. The same shows are also available on the mainstream channels (Comcast 9 and Verizon 32), but less frequently. This use of the channel was proposed by Lew Halprin and implemented by Kathy O’Keefe. Kathy schedules the shows and maintains a program listing on the Stow TV web site.

Stow TV cablecast 264 different shows in 2010. These included 25 Selectmen, 15 School Committee, and two Town Meetings. Stow residents additionally produced 142 new shows. From the Stow TV archives, 55 shows were replayed, often to promote annual events. Stow residents requested 26 more shows that were produced elsewhere in Massachusetts.

Stow TV helped educate residents about local issues and the actions of their government. Besides Selectmen, School Committee and Town Meetings, 26 other town government events, and 15 state government topics were shown. These included Finance and Planning Boards, Master Plan, Lake Boon Drawdown, Track Road Design, Pedestrian Walkway, Pompo School Reuse, Harvard Acres Water, Open Meeting and Campaign Finance Laws, MRC activities, Flu and Rabies Clinics, Stow Energy Group, Candidate debates, state legislative updates, Medicare and Social Security education, and Center School Groundbreaking. The bulletin board encouraged voter participation with registration and election information..

Many shows entertained and educated with a focus on Stow. These included local and school concerts, Memorial and Veterans Day ceremonies, Girl Scout and Eagle Scout ceremonies, “Springfest” festivities, library programs for children, school graduations, fire department events, Council on Aging presentations, talks at First Parish Church, Collings Foundation events, Stow history, locally written plays, shows by local artists, local environment and nature, fairs, childrens’ health and safety, charity events, and much more.

Stow TV implemented hundreds of colorful, eye-catching announcements on the “bulletin board.” A wide variety of local event announcements were continuously shown and updated regularly based on requests from community organizations. Many announcements provided public health and safety information and promoted local charities.

More than 50 photo shows were displayed on the bulletin board. These included library programs, Council on Aging events, community and school concerts, town festivals, nature walks, spring floods, school construction, West School events, Veterans and Memorial Day, and Stow Story Slam. Local contributing photographers included Nancy Arsenault, Jonathan Daisy, Jon French, Ralph Fuller, Kyr Gibson, Lew Halprin, Greg Irvine, Dick Luxner, Valerie Pederson, Dwight Sipler, Jay Solomon, Tara Taft, Greg Troxel, Paul Trunfio, and Mike Woelki.

Bob Mong and Beth Tobey provided IT support. Stow TV engaged Michael Ridinger for video server support. Gerry Horne managed Town Meeting sound. LACAC met several times during the year. LACAC members contributed time, advice, and oversight for spending and policy decisions, and LACAC member Bob Glorioso advised on equipment selection.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Dungan
Chris Funkhouser
Robert Glorioso

Len Golder
Lisa Lavina
Anne VanTine, Stow TV Coordinator